A motivated training intervention on volunteered pensioners conducted by Iran Alzheimer’s Association

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Presenter
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Background

In the past decades, Iran has experienced a series of sociodemographic changes:

• decline of mortality
• higher life expectancy
• rapid growth in elderly population
Background

• *Age* is one of the main risk factors of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

• After the age 65, the **prevalence** doubles every 5 years.

• 40%-50% of 85+ **live with dementia**.
46.8 million people were living with different dementias worldwide.

58% living in low and middle-income countries

The number will reach 131.5 millions people.

Today, in Iran the estimated number is 600,000-700,000
**Background**

- *Iran Alzheimer’s Association is the sole organization* in the country that supports people with dementia.
- In the past, IAA has had many endeavours to establish chapters around the country but it did not bear fruit.
- *Raising awareness* about dementia and reaching out to people with dementia and their carers across the country has been IAA’s prime goal.
Background

• In 2016, IAA captured a unique opportunity to open a dialogue with the Civil Servants Pension Organization, a subsidiary of the Labour Ministry with 30 offices around the country.

• This institution is in direct contact with the aging population and it had experienced many issues which was keen to address with the help of an expertise.
Background

Collaboration was formed between IAA and the Civil Servants Pension Organization

with the aim of:

- **Raising awareness** about the condition among the pensioners for early diagnosis and ultimately volunteers become IAA’s ambassadors in different provinces initiating Alzheimer’s associations reaching out to carers and people with dementia.

- **A motivated training package** covering all services rendered by IAA was developed to train the pensioners.
Method

• The investigation was carried out in 2 stages:
  ➢ First Stage

* A *volunteer appraisal questionnaire* was compiled, validated and approved by IAA’s Scientific Committee in order to select suitable candidates for establishing chapters of IAA in different regions of Iran.

* The IAA’s Scientific Committee is comprised of five members, namely a neurologist, a psychologist, a Psychotherapist, a nurse and a social worker.
Method

- **The target group** of this study was the pensioners of the Civil Servants Pension Organization from across Iran who had been active members in their organization for one year (2015-2016).
- This institution has more than one million members. A *sample of 100 keen volunteers* from the pensioners’ list who wished to be involved in IAA’s work in conjunction with the work of their organization, was selected randomly.
Method

- **Second Stage**
  - *The effect of the motivated training package* based on previous data which was developed by the Scientific Panel of IAA was investigated.

  - The *Quasi-experimental design* with a pre and post-tests was applied to evaluate the effect.
Method

**Second Stage**

- The validated volunteer appraisal questionnaire was given to the group as pre-test.
- Next, the group was divided into two.
- The motivated training package was delivered to the experimental group.
Method

The topics included

- aging
- Societal changes
- Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease
- Risk factors
- Prevention
- Treatment and drugs
- Behavioural disorders
- Ways to communicate with people with dementia
- Care principals.
Method

• *The post-test* was then applied to the control and experimental groups.

• The data was analysed using SPSS. The differences of pre-test and post-test were investigated by **ANCOVA**.
Results

The table above indicates that the difference between the average remaining scores is meaningful (Sig<0.003) and proves the investigation hypothesis. The motivated training intervention has had empowering and meaningful effect on the pensioners who had interest in establishing Alzheimer’s Associations.
کارگاه آموزشی آشنايي با بيماري آلزایمر و راههاي پيشگيري
14 آذرماه 95
كرمانشاه: خانه اميد
Conclusion

• It can be concluded that the validated appraisal questionnaire is a reliable tool for measuring competence of candidates who have interest in establishing Alzheimer’s associations across the country.

• The tool is suitable for Iranian culture.
Conclusion

The questionnaire served four purposes:

• The first purpose: to evaluate:
  - Volunteer’s knowledge of the condition
  - Volunteer’s empathy towards people with dementia and their care partners
  - Volunteer’s openness to address stigma

• The second purpose was the evaluation of candidate’s ability to deliver the acquired knowledge to different audiences.
Conclusion

The questionnaire served four purposes:

- The third purpose was the evaluation of volunteer’s skills such as:
  - leadership
  - Courage
  - Empathy
  - Analysis
  - Creativity…that would be required of a suitable candidate to initiate a non-profit organization.
Conclusion

The questionnaire served four purposes:

The fourth purpose:

• to evaluate the volunteer’s personality
• strong and weak points in managing & running an Alzheimer’s association.
Conclusion

• The selected volunteers after completion of 40 hours of training received a certificate of attendance.

• Meanwhile, IAA endeavoured to initiate collaboration between medical schools of each university in the provinces through Ministry of Health and the Civil Servants Pension Organization.

• An introductory letter for each trained volunteer was sent to the provincial universities. The latter will provide space for an Alzheimer’s Association.
Conclusion

• In September 2016, World alzheimer’s month, volunteers from 28 provinces participated in IAA’s training sessions. So far, activities are observed in 20 provinces.

To date, 4 Alzheimer’s associations have been established, 7 are in the process and 11 have the potentials to start.
Conclusion

On one hand

• we *raised awareness* about aging among the pensioners.

• *Empowered the pensioners* to have confidence in their volunteering work and have motivation to initiate Alzheimer’ associations reaching out to people with dementia and their care partners across Iran.
Conclusion

On the other hand

- the newly established Alzheimer’s associations which are serving as IAA’s chapters, will render similar services such as training & education, care and prevention in their provinces.

- We hope that through this network, we will address stigma and bring about early diagnosis. More training on care and dementia friendly communities are planned for the future to serve better people with dementia and their care partners across the country.